



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA-2019-D-1262]

Surgical Staplers and Staples for Internal Use--Labeling Recommendations; Guidance for Industry and Food and Drug Administration Staff; Availability

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA, we, or Agency) is announcing the availability of a final guidance entitled “Surgical Staplers and Staples for Internal Use--Labeling Recommendations.” FDA is issuing this guidance to provide labeling recommendations for surgical staplers and staples for internal use. These labeling recommendations are being issued because malfunctions and misuse associated with these devices have resulted in serious adverse events, including deaths.

DATES: The announcement of the guidance is published in the *Federal Register* on [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: You may submit either electronic or written comments on Agency guidances at any time as follows:

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to <https://www.regulations.gov> will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else’s Social Security number, or

confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on <https://www.regulations.gov>.

- If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see “Written/Paper Submissions” and “Instructions”).

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions): Dockets Management Staff (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.
- For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in “Instructions.”

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA-2019-D-1262 for “Surgical Staplers and Staples for Internal Use--Labeling Recommendations.” Received comments will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as “Confidential Submissions,” publicly viewable at <https://www.regulations.gov> or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, 240-402-7500.

- Confidential Submissions--To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states “THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.” The Agency will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The

second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on <https://www.regulations.gov>. Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as “confidential.” Any information marked as “confidential” will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA’s posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf>.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the “Search” box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852, 240-402-7500.

You may submit comments on any guidance at any time (see 21 CFR 10.115(g)(5)).

An electronic copy of the guidance document is available for download from the internet. See the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section for information on electronic access to the guidance. Submit written requests for a single hard copy of the guidance document entitled “Surgical Staplers and Staples for Internal Use--Labeling Recommendations” to the Office of Policy, Guidance and Policy Development, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 5431, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002. Send one self-addressed adhesive label to assist that office in processing your request.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Gibeily, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 66, Rm. 4660, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002, 301-796-0276.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

FDA is announcing the availability of a guidance for industry and FDA staff entitled “Surgical Staplers and Staples for Internal Use--Labeling Recommendations.” Surgical staplers for internal use are specialized prescription devices used to deliver compatible staples to internal tissues during surgery for resection, transection, and creating anastomoses. Surgical staplers and staples for internal use may be indicated for use in a wide range of surgical applications, including but not limited to gastrointestinal, gynecologic, and thoracic surgery. FDA developed this guidance because we had become aware of a large number of adverse events associated with use of both surgical staplers and staples for internal use. Both device misuse and device malfunctions are root causes of these adverse events. FDA believes that these problems may be mitigated by providing specific information about the risks, limitations, and directions for use in the labeling for the surgical staplers and staples for internal use.

This guidance is intended to provide recommendations for information that should be included in the product labeling for surgical staplers and staples for internal use, including contraindications, warnings, directions for use, and technical characteristics and performance parameters. Elsewhere in this issue of the *Federal Register*, FDA is announcing the final reclassification of surgical staplers for internal use from class I to class II with special controls. Some of the labeling recommendations in this guidance are intended to provide additional recommendations in order to help manufacturers comply with the labeling requirements as part of the special controls for surgical staplers for internal use.

A notice of availability of the draft guidance appeared in the *Federal Register* of April 24, 2019 (84 FR 17174). FDA considered comments received and revised the guidance as

appropriate in response to the comments, including revisions to the contraindications and warnings to avoid being overly prescriptive and not interfere with physicians' decision making under practice of medicine where appropriate. Revisions were also made to refine the directions for use and technical characteristics recommendations in response to feedback, as also described in the final reclassification of surgical staplers for internal use announced elsewhere in this issue of the *Federal Register*. FDA also added the relevant special controls language in order to make it clear what are requirements under the special controls and what are further clarifying recommendations.

This guidance is being issued consistent with FDA's good guidance practices regulation (21 CFR 10.115). The guidance represents the current thinking of FDA on "Surgical Staplers and Staples for Internal Use--Labeling Recommendations." It does not establish any rights for any person and is not binding on FDA or the public. You can use an alternative approach if it satisfies the requirements of the applicable statutes and regulations.

II. Electronic Access

Persons interested in obtaining a copy of the guidance may do so by downloading an electronic copy from the internet. A search capability for all Center for Devices and Radiological Health guidance documents is available at <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/device-advice-comprehensive-regulatory-assistance/guidance-documents-medical-devices-and-radiation-emitting-products>. This guidance document is also available at <https://www.regulations.gov>. Persons unable to download an electronic copy of "Surgical Staplers and Staples for Internal Use--Labeling Recommendations" may send an email request to CDRH-Guidance@fda.hhs.gov to receive an electronic copy of the document. Please use the document number 18013 and complete title to identify the guidance you are requesting.

III. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

While this guidance contains no collection of information, it does refer to previously approved collections of information. Therefore, clearance by the Office of Management and

Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3521) is not required for this guidance. The previously approved collections of information are subject to review by OMB under the PRA. The collections of information in the following FDA regulations have been approved by OMB as listed in the following table:

21 CFR Part	Topic	OMB Control No.
807, subpart E	Premarket Notification	0910-0120
800, 801, and 809	Medical Device Labeling Regulations	0910-0485

Dated: October 4, 2021.

Lauren K. Roth,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

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